Tracts on Homœopathy.

THE SMALL DOSE

OF

HOMŒOPATHY.

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"Effects misimputed, cases wrong told, circumstances overlooked, perhaps too, *prejudices and partialities against truth*, may for a time prevail, and keep her at the bottom of her well, from whence nevertheless she emergeth sooner or later, and strikes the eyes of all *who do not keep them shut.*"

BISHOP BERKELEY.

THE SMALL DOSE OF HOMŒOPATHY.

"Knowledge is more beautiful than any apparel of words which can be put upon it."
LORD BACON.

"GOD is my witness, and all good men know that I have now labored fifty years with all care and pains in the illustration and amplification of my art; and that I have so certainly touched the mark whereat I aimed, that antiquity may seem to have nothing wherein it may exceed us beside the glory of invention, nor posterity any thing left but a certain small hope to add some things, as it is easy to add to former inventions."

So thought, about three centuries ago, the celebrated surgeon AMBROSE PARE; and so think many in the present day. But it is in vain. Knowledge, notwithstanding, has increased, and is still increasing. At the very moment when PARE was expressing his self-complacent satisfaction, the veil which had covered the eyes of Europe for so many ages was being torn away; and at the present time the limits of our intellectual vision are being extended more rapidly than at any previous period of the history of the world.

If any one would see and participate in this progress of human knowledge, he must make an effort to free himself from the prejudices of education, from the power of pre-conceived opinion, and from the influence of habits of thought, and resolve to admit every conclusion which appears to be adequately supported by careful observation.

The subject I have now undertaken is one of acknowledged difficulty. I think no one can have *felt* this difficulty more than myself. I shall be happy if I succeed in reducing it within its proper dimensions. For this purpose I propose, after a few remarks on the general character and extent of our knowledge of natural things, to state the case and its difficulty, and then proceed to answer the three following questions:—

I. Are we acquainted with any facts which render it probable that infinitesimal quantities of ponderable matter *may* act upon the living animal body? In other words, what does *analogy* teach us?

II. Are there any facts which shew the action of infinitesimal quantities of ponderable matter on the *healthy* body?

III. What are the actual proofs in support of the assertion that such minute quantities of ponderable matter act remedially on the *diseased* body?

Our knowledge of nature is obtained by observing facts or events, and their succession, by our bodily senses. Our ideas of external objects are produced by the impression which those objects are capable of making upon our minds, through the instrumentality of our senses. We can observe and experiment upon these facts or events, and the manner in which they succeed each other, to the extent which our senses permit us, but no further. The limit of the powers of our corporeal senses is the limit of our knowledge. This limitation is absolute. For example:—

Sound is produced by vibrations of the air striking upon the organs of hearing. The various musical notes, from the lowest to the highest, are produced by the varying rapidity of these vibrations. The gravest sound is produced by about thirty vibrations in a second, the most acute by about a thousand. Each series of vibrations of the particles of the air is a fact or natural event, and when it strikes our ear we become acquainted with its existence by the sound perceived, provided the number of vibrations is not below thirty nor above a thousand in a second. These are the limits of our powers of observation of vibrations of the air. That there are vibrations slower than thirty and more rapid than a thousand in a second, cannot be doubted; and that there are living beings capable of perceiving them, is probable—the hare for example—but to us they are as though they did not exist.

The same is true of the eye and the observation of colors. The vibrations of the ether, (according to the undulatory theory of light,) produce impressions upon the organ of seeing, and the varying rapidity of these vibrations enables us to perceive the different colors. The limits are still narrower than those of sound. The whole scale of color, from violet to crimson, lies between vibrations which number 458 millions of millions (or billions) and 727 millions of millions in a second. That there are vibrations of the luminiferous ether, varying in frequency beyond these two extremes, must be almost certain, and that there are eyes which can feel their impression is probable,—the owl and the bat, for example,—but to us they are as though they were not. We shall never, in this life, hear new sounds, nor see new colors.

The senses of smell and touch are similarly limited. The hound can smell and the insect can touch what we cannot.

In two ways art has rendered assistance to our sense of sight. We stand upon the deck of a ship, while crossing the Atlantic, our eye takes in a considerable prospect of the surrounding waters, the telescope extends this prospect; still, in either case, it has positive limits, which are dependent upon the powers of the eye. This prospect, vast as it seems to us at

the time, bears a very small proportion to the real extent of the ocean.

Again, bodies soon become divided till their particles are too small for the naked eye to perceive them. That they still exist, and are susceptible of much further sub-division, is rendered certain by the aid which the microscope affords us; we can now follow them with the eye till they are millions of times less than before; but our vision again ceases—we lose the particle—yet we cannot conclude that it has ceased to exist, or ceased to be divisible. There are animals as small as this particle, and the atoms of which they are made up must be considerably less than themselves. The particle we have lost may be capable of further division indefinitely; so that the divisions we can see may bear a much smaller proportion to those we cannot see, than the prospect which the deck of a ship affords us does to the rest of the unseen ocean.

Beyond these limits our knowledge of external things cannot extend; they are impassable boundaries. We see how near they approach each other, and consequently how finite our knowledge is.

Besides these there are limits of another kind which require to be noticed. They will be best explained, as the former have been, by an example or two.

On the discovery of oxygen gas it was concluded by Lavoisier to be an element necessary to the processes of combustion and acidification; to be the sole supporter of combustion and the sole generator of acids; hypotheses were constructed and the name given accordingly. This was the limit of our knowledge on this subject at the time. A few years later it was discovered that a leaf of copper takes fire spontaneously and burns in chlorine gas, and the hydrogen and chlorine combine and form a powerful acid. Here then was a real extension of our knowledge.

If we collect in a strong vessel two volumes of hydrogen and one of oxygen, it is well known that the contact of flame, or an electric spark will cause an explosion, the gases disappear and a drop of water is produced. For some time it was believed that the agency of heat or of electricity was requisite to produce these mechanical and chemical phenomena. But it was afterwards found that if we insert a piece of cold spongy platinum into the mixture, this is sufficient to occasion the gases to explode, and the drop of water to be produced. Thus the previous limits of our knowledge were extended.

These examples show that our knowledge of nature has not only a fixed limit, dependent on the powers of our bodily senses, but that it is also limited by a sliding scale, dependent upon the industry with which we use these powers. This is

the boundary which has already so often been extended; these are the barriers which we may still hope to throw down.

The small dose of the Homœopathist, viewed in the light of this double limit, may be thus considered:—chemical tests follow the grain of medicinal substance to the third trituration, that is, till it has been divided into a million of parts, and a good eye, assisted by a powerful microscope, can follow it to the fourth or fifth trituration, beyond this it is absolutely lost to the perception of our sight. The sense of smell can detect musk to the fifth or sixth dilution. Everything that we know forbids us to conclude that the division of matter stops here, but our senses cannot follow it further. On the other hand our power of observing the effects produced by these doses has no limit but that of the sliding scale. Admitting for the moment, what I think I shall afterwards prove, that effects are produced, it is evidently as easy for us to observe them after a dose of the thirtieth as after one of the third or of the first trituration. The same cautions are necessary, but nothing more.

Another feature in the character of our knowledge of natural things is our ignorance of *modes of action*. This also is a result of the very limited powers of our bodily senses. The succession of events can be traced only for a few links, and we cannot discover how even these are connected together.

A lucifer match is rubbed on a rough surface and it inflames. *How* friction produces such a result we know not. If it be said that friction evolves heat, and that heat inflames the match, the question returns, *how* does friction evolve heat? and *how* does heat inflame the match? No one can tell.

No fact is better ascertained than that the moon is kept in its orbit round the earth, and the earth in its orbit round the sun, by the same force as that which causes a stone or an apple to fall to the ground. These bodies are separated by immense distances, how can they act upon each other? How is it possible for an inert lump of matter to influence another inert lump a hundred millions of miles off? It is by the force of gravitation; but what is gravity? and how does it act? We know not.

If we throw a piece of the metal potassium upon ice, it instantly inflames, burns itself into the ice and disappears. Part of the ice has been melted, the water decomposed, its hydrogen burnt, and its oxygen has united with the metal and formed a portion of caustic potash, which is all that remains in the cavity of the ice. These extraordinary phenomena are the effect of chemical affinity, but what is that? and how does it act? No one can inform us.

We can surround a seed with suitable proportions of air, warmth, and moisture, and can observe the gradual develop-

ment of the germ, of the entire plant, and of the ripening seed. *How* have all these wonderful changes been effected? they are attributed to the vital force, but we know not in the least what that is, nor how it acts. We can examine the various tissues with our microscopes, and analyse them in our laboratories, and thus become acquainted with many new and beautiful facts, which have presented themselves in the course of the growth of our experimental plant. When we have reduced the mechanism to the simplest form, we find that it consists of minute vesicles, formed by an elastic transparent membrane composed of a substance somewhat resembling starch, and called *cellulose*. When we have obtained the ultimate chemical analysis, we find certain proportions of carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen, with occasionally an addition of nitrogen, sulphur, phosphorus, and a few metals or metallic oxides. We find nothing which reveals to us what *vitality* is, nor *how* the successive changes we have witnessed have been brought about.

We take food and are nourished; we take medicines and are acted upon by them; we take poisons and die; but *how* these things act so as to produce such effects we know not.

> "What is the cause of health? and the gendering of disease?
> Why should arsenic kill? and whence is the potency of antidotes?
> Behold a morsel—eat and die; the term of thy probation is expired;
> Behold a potion—drink and be alive; the limit of thy trial is enlarged."
>
> TUPPER.

If it be said that our food is converted into chyme in the stomach, and into chyle in the intestines, that this is absorbed by the lacteals and conveyed by the thoracic duct into the blood, and that thus we are nourished. I reply, all this is granted, but what then? The question remains as it was, *how* is all this done? No one can tell.

Again, if it be said that medicines act on the nervous system, and stimulate the stomach, that they are sedatives and stimulants, emetics and purgatives, sudorifics and expectorants; what of all this? What are these stimulating powers, how do they produce their effects, and how are these effects beneficial? No answer is given.

The succession of events,—the steps by which an ultimate result is produced,—these, *within the limits described*, may be observed and experimented upon, but *how* each step is accomplished is beyond our ken. Of the recesses of nature, of the secret chambers in which her operations are carried on, how forces are "correlative," how they can be changed into each other, how they act upon matter, how matter acts upon them we are profoundly ignorant. Nevertheless we believe what we see without waiting until we can explain it.

Such is the actual condition, the general character and

extent of our knowledge of nature, and this consequence follows:—we are not entitled to reject any thing which professes to be a *fact*, if supported by a sufficient amount of evidence, merely because it is inconsistent with our expectations, does not coincide with our previous opinions, or is not within the limits of our former experience. We are not justified in concluding against a statement of fact by *à priori* reasoning or theoretical considerations. Analogies may render an assertion probable or the contrary, but no reasoning is conclusive against a matter of fact. The truth or falsehood of the announcement of a fact cannot be settled by reasoning or argumentation, it must be decided by evidence.

The case to be stated is this:—when a remedy has been chosen in accordance with the law of Homœopathy, (explained in Tract, entitled:—"The Truth of Homœopathy,") an inconceivably small quantity is often a sufficient dose.

The difficulty lies in the incredibility of this statement.

Be it well observed that the matter in hand is not to account for the efficacy of the small doses, but to prove that they are efficacious. The difficulty is not how to explain their action, but how to believe it.

A story is told of the Royal Society, that on a certain occasion it was proposed to that learned body to explain how it was that when a live fish was put into a basin quite full of water, none overflowed. After sundry grave hypotheses had been propounded and objections urged, it was at length proposed to try the experiment. So with this medical difficulty, leaving explanations, let us first try the experiment as a matter of fact. The whole case is embraced by the three questions already proposed.

I.—Are we acquainted with any facts which render it probable that infinitestimal quantities of ponderable matter *may* act upon the living animal body? In other words, what does *analogy* teach us?

Look at that bright star! so remote that the astronomer with his telescope cannot calculate its distance, and yet its brilliant beams of light strike upon the eye and convince the merest child of its existence. What a vivid flash that was, and how loud the thunder! See yonder oak riven to its centre,—what an irresistable force, and yet the chemist, with his most delicate balance cannot perceive its weight. Here is a mass of iron, weighing a thousand pounds, moving rapidly upwards, notwithstanding the attraction of the earth to this amount, without any visible link, towards another small bent piece of iron a foot long, encircled with the galvanic current;

—and now falling heavily to the ground the instant that current is arrested. What a mysterious, albeit very visible, effect from an invisible, impalpable, imponderable power, generated by such simple means. How warm the fire feels while we stand at the distance of some feet from the hearth! We can imagine how heat will go up the chimney because heated air is lighter than cold air, and will therefore ascend; but how does the warmth get across horizontally to our legs? Oh, it is radiant heat or caloric which travels in right lines in every direction. Very well, but what is radiant heat or caloric? What is light? What is electricity? What is magnetism? Several answers are given by philosophers to these questions. Taking light as the example, there are two modes of explaining it; according to NEWTON, light consists of *material particles*, emitted by luminous bodies, and moving through space with a velocity of 192,000 miles in a second, and these particles striking the eye produce the sensation of light. According to the other explanation of the phenomena, light consists in an undulating or vibratory movement, which, when it reaches the eye, excites the sensation of light, in the same manner as the sensation of sound is excited in the ear by the vibrations of the air. It is obvious that this theory also presumes the existence of a *material medium* through and by which the vibrations can be transmitted; in fact it supposes that an exceedingly thin and elastic medium, called ether, fills all space. For our present purpose it is unimportant which theory is regarded as the true one, inasmuch as both assume that *matter in some form* is concerned in producing the various impressions of light and color upon the living animal body. The effects are produced by imponderable but not by immaterial agents. To convey some faint notion of excessive minuteness, it may be mentioned that the length of an undulation of the extreme violet ray of light is 0,0000167 of an inch; the number of undulations in an inch is 59,750; and the number of undulations in a second is 727,000,000,000,000, (727 billions); while the corresponding numbers for the indigo ray are, length, 0,0000185 of an inch; 54,070 undulations in an inch; and 658,000,000,000,000, (658 billions) in a second. The other rays differ in similar proportions.

"That man," says HERSCHEL, "should be able to measure with certainty such minute portions of space and time is not a little wonderful; for it may be observed, whatever theory of light we adopt, these periods and these spaces have a *real existence*, being in fact deduced by NEWTON from direct measurements, and involving nothing hypothetical, but the names which have been given them."

Whether, therefore, light be viewed as material particles

emitted continuously, and in all directions, by luminous bodies, or as the vibrations of an elastic material medium, it is, in either case, dependent upon *matter* for its existence or production, it is matter, but exceedingly rare, subtle, and so minutely divided as to be to us absolutely imponderable.

It is probable that heat, electricity, and magnetism are motions, varying in kind, of the same ether.

That space is occupied by minute particles of matter admits of being proved in another manner quite independent of these observations on light. It has been ascertained by astronomers that one of the comets, called *Encke's*, which is a body not denser than a small cloud of steam, for the stars are seen through it without any diminution of their brilliancy, and which revolves round the sun in 1,208 days, has its period slightly diminished during each revolution. It is obvious that its motion is impeded by a *resisting medium*, by which its centrifrugal force is diminished, and consequently the relative power of gravity is increased; this brings the comet nearer to the sun, its orbit becomes contracted, and the time occupied by a revolution shortened. Thus, by another series of observations, we arrive at the same conclusion that there exists a rare, subtle, and *imponderable form* of minutely divided matter.

Infinitesimal quantities of this imponderable matter are capable of acting energetically, and *they do so act* habitually, producing such impressions as those of light, &c., upon the living animal body.

Reasoning, then, from analogy, we may conclude it to be *probable* that other forms of matter, even though reduced by the successive triturations, into *similarly small dimensions*, may also act, and act powerfully, upon the living body.

II.—Are there any facts which show the action of infinitesimal quantities of ponderable matter upon the *healthy* body?

The beautiful adaptation of the different departments of nature to each other is justly adduced as a demonstration that the whole has been created and arranged under the guidance of infinite wisdom and power. In nothing is this adaptation more conspicuous than in the appropriate fitness of the corporeal senses of man to the surrounding world.

So far as we are cognizant of the material creation, it is disposed under the five following forms:—solid bodies, liquids, gases or airs, imponderable ether, and minutely divided particles of ponderable bodies. For the appreciation of these various forms of matter we have five senses. The sense of touch, mainly conversant with solid bodies; that of taste, which is impressed by liquids only; the delicate organ of hearing, which can perceive the vibratory movements of gases

or airs; the still more delicate organ of the eye, capable of receiving impressions from the undulations of the imponderable ether; and, lastly, the sense of smell, adapted to the condition of the particles of bodies, when they have become so divided as to be infinitesimal, that is, indefinitely small and imponderable.

It is this form of matter which we have now specially to consider. The particles separated from larger masses, which become by degrees so small as to elude in succession the perception of all our senses, and perhaps at length are reduced to a state similar to the ether.

A cubic inch of Platinum, the heaviest body we are acquainted with, weighs upwards of 5,000 grains. A cubic inch of hydrogen, the lightest body which affect our balances, weighs 2 grains. These balances, by ingenious contrivances, are made very sensitive, I have one which readily weighs 0.005, or five thousandths of a grain. Others have been constructed still more delicate; but the particles we are now examining are far too light for any balance to appreciate.

Mechanical division can be carried to an almost incredible degree. Gold, in gilding, may be divided into particles at least one thousand four hundred millionths of a square inch in size, and yet possess the color and all other characters of the largest mass. Linen yarn has been spun so that a distinctly visible portion could not have weighed the 127 millionth of a grain; and yet this, so far from being an ultimate particle of matter, must have contained more than one vegetable fibre, that fibre itself being of complex organization, and built up of an indefinitely great number of more simple forms of matter.

The perfection of modern chemistry is such that a quantity of silver equal to the billionth of a cubic line, can be readily detected.*

That particles become divided into less portions than is shewn in these examples is evident from the daily observation of the sense of smell. The violet fills even a royal apartment with its sweet odor, which is thus readily perceived, but which absolutely eludes every other mode of observation. How inconceivably small must be the particles of all odors! And yet how obviously material they are.

A grain of musk may be exposed for a long period, and be unceasingly emitting particles, easily appreciated by the sense of smell, yet has it not lost in weight what the most sensitive balance can detect.

These are instances of infinitesimal quantities of matter acting upon the *healthy* body.

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* Elements of Chemistry, by Sir R. Kane, 2d Ed. p. 7.

Contagious malaria constitute a large class of agents whose power of injuriously acting upon our healthy body is so greatly dreaded, and no one has yet doubted that they are material. Who voluntarily crosses the Pontine marshes at certain seasons of the year, or exposes himself to the plague of Constantinople, or the yellow fever of the West Indies? The microscope cannot shew these terrible particles, nor can chemical analysis detect them. Ozone perhaps decomposes them.

To come nearer home, a clergyman visits a patient in scarlet fever, but does not touch him, he afterwards calls upon a friend, and shakes the hand of one of the children as he passes her on the staircase. The next day this child sickens with the scarlet fever, and her brothers and sisters take it from her; no other connection can be traced. This is no uncommon occurrence, and no one doubts the communication of infection in such a manner, neither is it doubted that the infection itself is something material. What is the *weight* of the particle of matter thus conveyed? Is it heavier than the millionth of a grain of belladonna which, it is asserted by Homœopathists, is sufficient, when given at short intervals, to arrest the progress of such a case?

These, then, are also instances of infinitesimally small quantities of matter acting upon the living body in *health*.

There are numerous liquids which have the power of affecting the healthy body, and some of them of taking away life, and yet in each instance the quantity of the active ingredient is so exceedingly small that hitherto no means have been effectual in detecting it.

The Vaccine matter has been so often mentioned that I will not allude to it further.

Several animals are furnished with poisonous liquids, which, when injected into a wound, occasion the disease or death of the wounded animal. Serpents, bees, scorpions, and spiders, are well known examples. In the venomous serpents there is

found an apparatus of poison-fangs, constituting perhaps the most terrible weapons of attack met with in the animal creation. The poison teeth (*a*) are two in number, placed in the upper jaw, when not in use they are laid flat upon the roof of the mouth; but when the animal is irritated, they are plucked up from their concealment, and stand out like two long lancets. Each fang is traversed by a canal, through which the poison flows. The gland (*b*) which secretes the poison, is composed of cells communicating with a duct (*c*) by which the venom is conveyed to the tooth. The poison gland is covered by a muscle (*d*) which is attached to a thin fibrous line (*e*). This is part of the muscle which closes the jaw, so that the same power which strikes the teeth into the viper's prey, compresses at the same moment the bag of poison, and forces it through the fangs into the wound.*

The quantity of poison contained in the gland scarcely exceeds a drop, but the smallest portion of this liquid taken up upon the point of a needle, and inserted by a slight puncture into the skin of an animal, is sufficient to produce all its poisonous effects. From some serpents it produces almost immediate death. FONTANA first subjected it to chemical analysis, and sacrificed many hundred vipers in his experiments. Others have succeeded him in these labors, but nothing peculiar has been discovered. The poison is a yellow liquid, and has not been distinguished chemically from simple gum water.†

Here are examples of infinitesimal quantities of ponderable matter acting with frightful energy upon the *healthy* body.

Medicinal substances furnish other proofs. I must content myself with a single example. Inappreciable quantities of Ipecacuanha give an affirmative answer to our present question, so decisive and convincing that I make no apology for extracting the following cases from that well-known and highly respectable allopathic periodical the *London Medical and Physical Journal:—*

"An apprentice of mine, naturally healthful, and of an active disposition, is invariably affected with a most distressing and protracted sneezing on the most careful dispensing of the smallest quantity of *Ipecacuanha*. A more continued application of it, such for instance as happens in the preparation of the compound powder, is followed with dyspnœa, (difficulty of breathing,) cough and spitting of blood. Having occasion some time ago to compound the medicine for several days together, he became seriously affected by it, in the way just stated, and he has not enjoyed full health since. It has evi-

* The Animal Kingdom, by T. Rymer Jones, p, 588
† Thompson's Animal Chemistry, p. 538.

dently produced a disposition to asthma, and an aptitude for pulmonary ailment, which he had not used to possess."*

"In the year 1787 or 8, in pounding the root to make the *Ipecacuanha Wine*, I was suddenly affected with violent and reiterated sneezings, with a very profuse defluction from the eyes and nose; these symptoms continued without intermission for many hours, accompanied by great heat and anguish throughout the cavity of the thorax, and the most oppressive dyspnœa. Exhausted by the violence of the attack, I was conveyed to bed, where, supported, for I was unable to lie down, I remained more or less afflicted till the next morning. I arose extremely weakened, and with all the usual appearances of a severe catarrh. From this date I have been perpetually tormented by violent catarrhs. The slightest motion of the simple or compound powder of Ipecacuanha superinduces precisely similar, but more gentle effects. When weighing or mixing these powders afterwards, I carefully guarded my mouth and nose by a cloth; but an incautious removal of it for inspiration, till perhaps half an hour had elapsed, after the medicine was finished, occasioned the same inconveniences. At length I was compelled to quit the shop when Ipecacuanha was in hand; indeed I have frequently entered my own, or the shop of a stranger, long after it had been used, and by the instant recurrence of these very distressing sensations, have been able too accurately to ascertain the recent exposure of this drug.

"I never designedly had recourse to Ipecacuanha for more than twenty years. Two accidents lately, within a few weeks of each other, afforded me the opportunity of determining its present effects when inwardly administered. A friend hearing me cough in the street, presented me with a few lozenges; I took two at once; they were scarcely dissolved, ere I felt a pungent roughness in every part of the mouth, exciting a great secretion of saliva; this, it is worthy of noting, was the reverse in the preceding attacks, when the excretory ducts uniformly denied their offices, and occasioned a disagreeable dryness of the mucous membrane. As this acrid sensation extended to the lips, they became prodigiously swollen and inflamed. On the fauces I experienced the like effects, with a most teazing itching irritation; it descended the trachea, producing pain and dyspnœa; it likewise proceeded down the œsophagus, creating a slight heat in the stomach, and passed with moderate gripings throughout the intestinal canal.

"Soon after, a powder was brought to my house, with an order to prepare more of the same kind. I conveyed a few

* Mr. Spencer, Medical and Physical Journal, June, 1809, Vol. 21, p. 485.

particles to my tongue to discover its composition; I quickly experienced those feelings in the mouth and lips which arose from the lozenges before, but in a milder degree, and they extended no further. Upon referring to the prescription I found that there was one grain of Ipecacuanha and ten of calcined magnesia. The incident gave birth to the idea that the former strange affection had originated from the same cause as the latter, and upon inquiry my suspicion was confirmed; they were *Ipecacuanha* lozenges which I had swallowed .... Snuff and other stimulating powders excite no more irritation on me than on others."*

"One of the editors recollects a somewhat similar effect produced on his father."

"To these three cases, (the two preceding and one by Mr. Royston, alluded to in January 9, 1809,) I shall now add two in females, who seem to have been affected in so similar a manner by the subtle effluvia of Ipecacuanha, that to enumerate their symptoms would only be to repeat what has already been given respecting those effects.

"The first of these cases is that of a lady, now about fifty, the wife of a surgeon, and mother of a numerous family. The general state of health has always been good, her disposition lively and active, and by no means possessing anything of that valetudinarian irritability which marks striking peculiarity of constitution. She has been much in the habit, when the hurry of business required it, of assisting her husband in dispensing medicines. This gave rise to her first discovery of the effects of Ipecacuanha on her habit. I had an opportunity of remarking this fact about eighteen months ago, being on a professional visit at her house, while her husband labored under a severe fever. She was about to dispense one of my prescriptions in which some Ipecacuanha had been ordered, and the moment she saw what the composition was, she ran from the shop to a distant part of the house, refusing to dispense it. This excited my curiosity to find the cause. On following her she explained it, and with some degree of anxiety looked round, lest some of the doors between her and the shop should have been left open while the prescription was about to be dispensed. As my stay was protracted some days, I had occasion to see these fears repeatedly excited. One forenoon in particular, while she was in her kitchen, a considerable distance from the shop, two passage doors being between herself and it,) while she could neither see nor know beforehand, that Ipecacuanha, which was the case, was weighing, she called out with vehemence to have the doors closed, on account of the sensations she was beginning to feel.

* Medical and Physical Journal, March, 1810, Vol. 23, p. 199

"The second instance came to my knowledge only the day before yesterday. The lady who is the subject of it called on me on her mother's account, who was indisposed, and being shewn into my room, took up your last Journal which lay on my table to amuse herself till my appearance. On my entering the room she told me she had been reading my book, and the part which she accidentally opened was Mr. B.'s communication; she added with a smile, this is far from so uncommon a case as this gentleman seems to think, for I myself am afflicted by it in the same manner; and then went into considerable detail of the symptoms it excited in her. The catarrhal affection and sneezing she described as particularly distressing. The copious flow was so acrid as to excoriate, in a few hours, the parts over which it fell. Her upper lip and the alæ of the nostrils were swelled. But what created in her the most alarm was its effects on her eyes. They became swelled and stiff, and sight was diminished. The eye-lids tumified so that the eyes were sunk almost out of sight, which seemed to be the chief cause of the diminution of vision; the discharge from her eyes was nearly as great as that from her nose, and little less acrid . . . . No catarrhal effects were excited in her by snuff."*

"I know a lady who was always seized with asthma whenever Ipecacuanha root was pounding in the shop; so sensible was she of this effect, that it was in vain to conceal from her what was going on in the mortar. This occurred about thirty years ago, in the lady of the physician, (Dr. Buckham, of Wooler,) to whom I was first a pupil, and I was twice the innocent cause of the complaint myself. I thought by her being in a remote part of the house she could not be affected; but it was almost immediately felt, and the paroxysm lasted many hours. This lady was exquisitely nervous.

"I have been informed of different cases almost similar; they were all women; but, conceiving the observation a common one, I did not note them."†

Two similar cases, the wives of medical men, are given in Vol. 24, page 233, by Dr. Scott. One attack, caused by being near her husband at the time he put some Ipecacuanha into a bottle was so violent as *nearly to prove fatal*. There was a remarkable stricture about the throat and chest, with very troublesome shortness of breathing, with a particular kind of wheezing noise. The symptoms were aggravated at night. At 3 o'clock in the morning she was gasping for breath at a window, pale as death, her pulse scarcely to be felt, and in the

* Dr. Hamilton, Med. and Phys. Journal, April, 1810. Vol. 23, p. 318.

† Dr. Trotter, Med. and Phys. Journal, July, 1810, Vol. 24, p. 60.

utmost immediate danger of suffocation. She became easier about 11 a. m. till about 11 p. m. *The same scene was continued eight days and nights successively.*"

"Mr. Leighton, a very eminent surgeon at Newcastle, very nearly lost his wife in a similar manner."

Here, then, are undeniable proofs from odors, from contagious malaria, from animal poisons, and from medicinal substances, from which it may be strongly concluded that infinitesimal quantities of ponderable matter do act with great, and sometimes with destructive energy upon the *healthy* body.

III.—What are the actual proofs in support of the assertion that such minute quantities of ponderable matter act remedially on the *diseased* body?

The reply to the first question proposed renders it *probable* that infinitesimal quantities of ponderable matter *may* act upon the living animal body.

The answer to the second question embraces very numerous and undeniable facts which prove, in the most positive and unexceptionable manner, that such small quantities do produce direct, and sometimes frightfully powerful effects upon the living body in *health*.

That similarly minute quantities will act upon the *unhealthy* body is thus shewn to be in the highest degree probable, if not certain; for it may be argued *à fortiori* if they can act upon the body in health, much more will they be able to act when the nervous system is in a state of exalted sensibility, produced by the morbid excitement of disease. Any portion of the surface of the body may be rubbed violently, when in a healthy condition, without painful sensation; but the same part, when inflamed, will shrink from the slightest touch.

It now therefore only remains that, by the evidence of facts, I prove, generally, that they do act, and particularly that their action is beneficial and remedial in disease.

If any one were to ask a physician who has been, for a few years, in the daily habit of prescribing these small doses, *Do they act beneficially?* he would see an expression of countenance very like that which another person would exhibit if, while standing before a good fire, he were gravely asked if he felt any warmth. On the other hand, if a physician who has not been willing to try the doses, nor to see them tried by others, be asked, *Can they act upon disease?* he assumes a tone like that of the King of Siam, when told by some European travellers that water sometimes becomes solid.

I do not address those who have tried the doses—they need no further evidence; nor those who will not try them, and who, with wonderful presumption, declare that such doses *cannot* act—they may be quietly passed by; but those whose

minds are are open to conviction, and who think the care of their health and the prolongation of their lives an affair of sufficient moment to require them to give attention to any information on the subject openly and candidly set before them.

The evidence which proves the beneficial action of the small dose is the same in kind as that which proves any other natural fact,—it is the evidence of observation and experiment,—that which our senses afford us. It is of the same nature as the evidence we have of the relation of cause and effect in any events which happen around us. It does not differ from that which we have of the operation of the *large* doses of medicine.

A patient has a violent head-ache; twelve leeches are applied to his his temples; relief follows the application of the leeches. Had this happened but once, we ought to conclude that the fact of the removal of the pain following the application of the leeches was merely a coincidence, not an instance of cause and effect; but it has happened a hundred times, and we therefore conclude that the relief was the *effect* of the loss of blood by the leeches. Another patient has a similarly violent head-ache; the millionth or the billionth of a drop of the juice of the deadly Nightshade is given; relief quickly follows. Had this happened but once, we ought to set it down as a coincidence—an accidental meeting of two events having no connection with each other— but it has happened a hundred times; shall it not then be concluded that the removal of the pain was the *effect* of the administration of the dose? Let any one who doubts such a conclusion, and who would attribute such frequent recurrences of the same succession of events to chance, take up a kaleidescope and turn it round till he gets the same figure a second time. We need not wish him a severer punishment.

I now offer the following statement of facts, for the truth of which I hold myself responsible.

I am aware of "the difficulty of tracing effects to their true causes;" and also that there are "various sources of error in conducting medical inquiries." It is due to truth to observe that I have used every endeavor to overcome the one and to avoid the other. I cannot hope to have succeeded in doing this in every case, but that the ultimate conclusion is a safe and a true one I can entertain no doubt.

ACUTE DISEASE.

It will not be expected that, in a pamphet like the present, I should give minute details of disease. Were it the fitting opportunity I could relate the particulars of the following cases: —

Inflammation of the Eye.—Mr. Brodribb, in his "Homœopathy unveiled,"

observes that "from the peculiar structure of the eye, we may often actually witness what is going on in diseases of that organ . . . . With the same fidelity we can observe the effect of efficient treatment in the arrest and removal of the disease, and that too with such unerring certainty as to leave no doubt in our mind of the relation of the two as cause and effect."

I have formerly often treated diseases of the eye by what Mr. Brodribb would acknowledge would be "efficient treatment," and have often carefully watched its results. I have now also in a considerable number of cases treated them with the small doses of Homœopathy, and the beneficial results have been such "as to leave no doubt in my mind of the relation of the two, as cause and effect." One case was cured in a few days by the 3d dilutions of Arnica, Aconite and Belladonna, where an allopathic physician had considered leeches to be indispensible. Other inflammatory affections of the eye have recovered much more rapidly and satisfactorily than I ever saw them do under any other treatment.

Inflammation of the Throat.—The remark made by Mr Brodribb with respect to the visibility of diseases of the eye applies also to those of the throat. I have very repeatedly seen the influence of minute doses of Belladonna, Mercury, Hepar-Sulphuris and other remedies upon the various stages of inflammation of the throat manifested in the most unmistakable manner. The Rev —— has had attacks of ulcerated sore throat repeatedly; under the usual treatment of blisters, &c., he has been laid up for some weeks on each occasion. I attended him lately for a similar attack; there was a large ulcer on each tonsil; he could scarcely swallow or speak; he was very feverish, and for two nights he had been deprived of sleep. Without discontinuing his usual duties, which are very laborious, for a single hour, and without any local application of any kind, he was perfectly cured in six days. In other cases where I thought suppuration and puncture of the tonsils inevitable, all the mischief dispersed and recovery was effected in few days.

Croup.—I have stated in another of these Tracts, that several cases of Croup have been treated after the new method. I have only to add here that the medicines were given in infinitesimal doses, and to assure my readers that the relief afforded, without any other treatment, not even a warm bath or a mustard poultice, was, in every instance, most obvious, rapid, and complete.

Inflammation of the Chest.—Several cases of Bronchitis and some of Pneumonia have come under my care during the last four years. They have had no means whatever used to relieve them but the small doses. They have recovered more quickly and satisfactorily, and the attacks have been followed with a much shorter period of convalescence than I ever before witnessed, and the cure has been, so far, permanent.

Erysipelas.—This is always a serious and often a fatal complaint; it affords a good example of the confusion and inconsistency of allopathic medicine. "The practice," says Mr. Nunneley, who has written an excellent treatise on Erysipelas, "pursued by different persons is of the most dissimilar and contradictory nature; while one party *relies upon blood-letting, freely and repeatedly performed*, as the surest and only method of cure; another and perhaps larger party, certainly as respectable, so far as authority goes, utterly repudiates the abstraction of blood, and *depends upon tonics and cordials* for the removal of the complaint. Indeed so confidently are the most opposite remedies enforced, and so contradictory are the results said to follow the application of the same means, in the hands of different persons, equally worthy of credit, that the impugner of medical skill may fairly point with confidence to this part of our field, and *demand if such contradictions are worthy of the name of a science or of trust?*"*

It is not so with the Homœopathic treatment of Erysipelas, With minute doses of Belladonna, Rhus, and Lachesis, the usual remedies for this peculiar inflammation, I have succeeded in all the cases I have met with—among them were four severe ones—beyond my expectations. In one case, on the second day of the attack the inflammation had spread over the face, ears, most of the scalp,

* A Treatise on Erysipelas, by Thos. Nunneley, London, 1841.

and part of the neck, with a large blister on each cheek, very severe headache, and a pulse of 150; this was entirely well at the end of a week.

Rheumatism.—Some cases of Rheumatic fever have afforded me excellent opportunities of seeing how beautifully the small doses relieve and frequently quickly cure this otherwise intractable complaint—one of the opprobria medicorum. One case, a widow lady of 72, who had it then for the first time, and while in a state of considerable debility, was nearly well in a fortnight. Another, a farmer having organic disease of the heart, left by a former attack, a most severe case, with violent spasms of the heart threatening to terminate life, recovered in three weeks.

Cholera and Diarrhœa.—The numerous statements published in various countries of the great efficacy of Homœopathic treatment in Cholera and Diarrhœa have been confirmed by my own experience, so far as that has gone. In these cases I have always used the small doses, except when I was anxious to test the *principle* of Homœopathy by giving ponderable quantities of the medicine indicated.

Yellow Fever.—The ravages which this dreadful complaint is now making in Jamaica and other Islands of the West Indies are painfully calamitous; of course I have not myself treated this terrible malady, but from a trial of Homœopathy, which has just been made in Barbadoes by Dr. Godine, it appears that, even after the black vomit has taken place, hitherto considered so fatal a symptom, Homœopathy can still, with the blessing of God, rescue a victim from the grave. This ought to attract the attention of Governments. My information is from the West Indian, of October 28th, 1852, a Barbadoes paper, which has been kindly sent me.

These must suffice as *a specimen* of the results in the treatment of acute diseases with minute doses of medicine only. To my own mind the efficacy of the method is most palpable and satisfactory. I have not one-fourth of the apprehension of an unfavorable termination in any acute attack of disease which I had in former times. The duration of the illness is much shortened, the danger greatly lessened, the strength of the patient husbanded, and convalescence, often so tedious and distressing, is almost annihilated.

CHRONIC DISEASE.

Pain in the Elbow.—Mr. K., a shopkeeper, consulted me in August, 1850, on acount of a very distressing pain in the elbow, from which he had been suffering for twelve months. He had been under surgical treatment, I believe, the whole of that time. The joint was stiff and swollen, but did not appear to me to be seriously diseased; the pain, however, was described as being at times excruciating. I gave him a single dose of Staphysagria, highly diluted. In a few days I called to inquire after him, when he told me that the night he took my dose he was very strangely affected; he could scarcely describe how, but it was so powerful that he would not take any more of my medicine. "How is your elbow?" "Look!" he cried, and moving his arm in all directions in a rapid manner, declared that it was well; and so it remained.

Diabetes Mellitus.—On the 7th of March, 1850, I was consulted by Mrs. —— a widow of about 47, who had been suffering for several years from various ailments, and had been during much of that time under the care of a physician. I found that one of her complaints was diabetes mellitus, which had been increasing upon her for the last two years. The quantity of urine in the twenty-four hours was fifteen pints, and the weight of sugar contained in this exceeded a pound. It would be tedious to report the daily progress of this case; it most suffice to say that under the influence of minute doses of Aconite, Sulphur, Nux-vomica, China, Belladonna, and some other remedies, by the middle of July she was so much recovered that the quantity of water was reduced to below three pints, that is to the quantity natural in health; and though the presence of sugar could still be detected, it was comparatively small in quantity. She

then went to the sea-side for two or three weeks. During her stay there, her son wrote to me that his "mother was so well that she did not appear to ail anything." She has since suffered in various ways from mental causes, and has had some return of the diabetes, but it has again yielded to the same remedies. It may be said of this case that the tendency to the complaint is not removed. This is granted; but while the causes which first induced the complaint are, in all probability, still surrounding the patient, it is not susprising if they succeed in bringing on second or third attacks. I have seen several cases of sugared urine formerly, but I never saw the old remedies afford such permanent benefit. Neither is it reasonable to expect that the new method will always succeed in such an untractable, and hitherto usually fatal disease.

December 28th, 1852. I called to see this patient to-day, when she told me she had not felt so well for many years as she did at present. It is now nearly three years since I first saw her in the alarming condition I have described.

October 14th, 1853. She has now continued well nearly another year.

Tabes Mesenterica.—In September, 1852, Mrs. H—— consulted me about her baby, eight months old, suffering from mesenteric disease. The little infant was greatly emaciated, and its mother expected that it was going to die. Excessively minute doses of Sulphur and Chalk were followed by a wonderful improvement in a fortnight; the medicines were repeated, and at the end of six weeks the child seemed nearly well—its stomach almost reduced to its natural dimensions, and its limbs filling up. Mrs. H—— had been at first quite incredulous, and came to me only through the persuasion of a friend; she was now so much gratified that she thought it her duty to call upon her former medical advisers, to shew them the child, and to offer a copy of one of my pamphlets. An angry scene ensued, and the following conversation took place:— "I refuse to take the book; if Dr. Sharp said he was doing nothing we could respect him, but as it is we cannot." Mrs H.: "But, sir, my child is cured!" "Yes, it has got well by letting medicine alone." "But I had tried what letting medicine alone would do for some time, and the child grew worse and worse. It began to improve from the very day Dr. Sharp's medicine was commenced; and how was it that two other babies of mine died of the same disease in your hands? If medicines do harm, and you knew that doing nothing would cure, why did not you recommend that plan?"

Disease of the lungs.—Mr. W. S——, aged 20, had a severe attack of inflammation in the chest during last winter, and was attended by two or three medical men. This was followed by chronic disease during the spring and summer. His friends despaired of his recovery. When I saw him in September, 1852, he was emaciated; had cough and expectoration; his pulse 120; occasional flushings in the face; no appetite; the whole of the right lung returned a dull sound on percussion, and there was a peculiar sound of the voice through the stethoscope.

I made no alteration in his diet or habits, and gave him nothing but infinitesimal doses of the medicines employed, such as Aconite, Bryonia, Phosphorus, &c.; these have been continued three months. He declares that he feels quite well; he looks well; his appetite is good; he has gained flesh; he takes horse exercise, notwithstanding the wet; he has not the slightest cough nor expectoration; no fever; no perspiration; and the only symptom which remains to testify the reality of his former danger is revealed by the stethoscope, the unnatural sound of the voice, though much diminished, has not yet ceased.

Warts.—In three cases out of four I have succeeded in clearing the hand of ugly warts. In all by internal treatment alone, and with infinitesimal doses of the medicines employed.

Partial Paralysis.—Mrs. M—— consulted me, three months ago, for paralysis of the thumb of the right hand, which had existed for some time. She had entirely lost the use of it; for instance she could not take up a needle or hold it; she was otherwise ailing. The case reminded me of the condition of persons exposed to the poisonous influence of lead, as painters are. I prescribed the billionth of a grain of lead, in occasional doses for a month, and nothing else. At the expiration of the month, her husband, a respectable farmer, called to

say that she was rather better, and wished for more medicine; it was repeated for a second month, and afterwards for a third, on hearing still better accounts of her. A few days ago I was in the neighborhood, and called unexpectedly to see her. I found her sitting at her fire-side busily engaged in *sewing*, and looking so much better that I scarcely recognized her. She spoke very gratefully of her improved condition.

I am not now replying to opponents, but I cannot avoid making a quotation here from Mr. Brodribb— "Lead will give rise to all the symptoms of colic, and produce a certain form of paralysis, but it will not cure either of those affections."* How does Mr. Brodribb know this? Has he ever tried it in these diseases in *any* dose! And if not, how can he make such an assertion?

Habitual Constipation.—It is a great bug-bear with many, especially with many amiable amateur practitioners of the healing art, that Homœopathy dispenses with the old-fashioned doses of Gregory and Black Draught; that it professes to be able to go on in its way prosperously without the aid of Calomel and Colocynth, Senna, Salts, and Jalap.

I acknowledge that at first I found this difficult to accomplish, but it is a difficulty surmounted. I now never think of having recourse to these remedies in the treatment of those cases in which they have usually been considered indispensable. If they are not necessary they must be injurious. If they can be safely laid aside, the patient must be the gainer.

But more than this. In a large number of cases of habitual constipation, I have succeeded quite beyond my own expectations in entirely removing this disagreeable condition. Some had taken aperients so long and in such increasing quantities that matters had come to extremity; one lady had taken them ten or twelve years; another told me she had never gone to bed without pills for between forty and fifty years; and another that, a pint of senna, &c., had become ineffectual, and yet an entire emancipation from this thraldom has been effected by the infinitesimal doses of the appropriate medicine. The nauseous physic was laid aside at once, and, I believe, for ever. I have the pleasure of knowing one lady who did this at 70, and she is now enjoying comfortable health at 83.

Such is a brief sketch of the results of the treatment of chronic disease.

This is the case of the small dose, and the kind of evidence upon which it rests. I think it well to mention that the dilution of the medicines I have most frequently used is the 3d—in which the grain or the drop is divided into a million of parts. I have often used the 2d, (the 10,000th part), and sometimes the 1st, (the 100th part of a grain). I have also often used the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 12th; and I have seen beneficial effects follow the administration of the 18th and the 30th. Further than this I have not gone, and I do not hold myself committed to anything beyond my own observation and experience.

We are indebted to Hahnemann for the invention of this method of preparing and administering the remedy, as we are for the discovery of the rule by which we are to be guided in its choice.

The difficulty of the case, I have said, lies in its incredibility, I trust this is now greatly lessened, if not removed. It is no other than that which attaches to every new statement

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* Homœopathy Unveiled, by W. P. Brodribb, 2d Ed. p. 9.

—*its novelty.* It is the same difficulty as that which fastened itself upon the mind of the King of Siam. It vanishes before evidence. *It is credible* that the small dose can effect "a safe, speedy, and permanent cure" whenever a cure is possible, *when it is found practically to do so.*

To those who contend that, after so many triturations and dilutions, there can be nothing left in the dose, I beg to put two questions: first, seeing that a grain of the medicinal substance is added to ninety-nine grains of sugar in the first trituration, in which particular dilution has it ceased to exist? And, secondly, if the doses contain nothing, or are "nihilities," as Mr. Brodribb calls them, how do effects such as those referred to in this pamphlet follow their administration?

To those who attempt to quash such statements as I have made by accusations of fraud or of falsehood, I have nothing to say. There is no common ground upon which we can meet to argue.

To conclude, one obvious fact cannot be overlooked; all who bear testimony to the efficacy of these doses have tried them, either upon themselves or upon others; while those who deny their action not only have not tested it, but, for the most part, boast that they have not, reject the proposal to try the remedies with disdain, and continue to stigmatize those who do so as "knaves or fools," or "morally attenuated dwarfs."*

Right reason being our guide, with which of these two parties is truth most likely to be found?

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* The "Lancet," for Nov. 6th, 1852.

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